

Memo

To: Policy and Research Committee

Fr: Chau Ly, Program Manager

Re: Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant Update

Date: December 2, 2013

The following is a summary of the key activities that have happened in November.

Resources for Early Learning—partnership with WGBH to create a digital hub of early learning resources for educators and parents of children 0-5 years old

- Following the unveiling of resourcesforearlylearning.org in September, WGBH launched the Year 2 activities which include continued development of content for educators of infants and toddlers (birth-3) and resources for parents of preschoolers (3- to 5-years-old); raising awareness about resourcesforearlylearning.org through presentations and trainings; and planning for the text message campaign to begin in 2014.
- In October and November WGBH collaborated with community partners to do four presentations on the digital hub to audiences of early childhood educators, librarians, and museum staff. On Saturday, November 23, 2013, Massachusetts Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge was featured on the WGBH digital mural. Photos taken of educators, parents, and children from across the Commonwealth illustrated how this grant program is helping support teaching and learning. A description of RTT ELC was featured on the WGBH website and served as a companion to the images on the digital mural.

QRIS Program Improvement Grants—funding to engage educators in program planning for quality improvements, make direct program improvements in pursuit of upward progress on the levels defined in the QRIS system, and ensure that children receive high quality early education experiences

- 263 providers awarded grants in Round Two of the QRIS Program Improvement Grants totaling \$994,856

Post Master's Certificate Program Early Education Research, Policy, and Leadership—a program for early childhood educators with Master's degrees currently working in EEC-licensed or license-exempt programs to further their own knowledge, skills, and abilities

- On November 2, there was a Leadership Forum for Cohort 1 students at the University of Massachusetts-Boston. Each student presented their policy project. Stacey Goffin was the keynote speaker.
- The Post-Master's Certificate Program will be showcased in the Executive Office of Education's newsletter.
- The University of Massachusetts-Boston is in the process of developing an doctoral program in early childhood education that will accept the Post Master Certificate credits.

Early English Language Development Standards—recommendations on how to teach English to young children

- The Early English Language Development Standards Guidelines (E-ELDS) were approved by the EEC Board at the November 12, 2013 meeting. The E-ELDS Guidelines provide a developmentally sound framework for assessing and instructing dual language learners (ages 2.5 to 5.5 years old) that aligns with the WIDA K-12 Standards and corresponds to states' Early Learning Standards (ELS) as well as the Head Start's Early Learning Child Development and Early Learning Frameworks. These Guidelines support young children who are in the process of learning English as an additional language prior to entering kindergarten and are still developing basic competency in their home language(s) as they acquire English.
- Information sessions and webinars about E-ELDS will be conducted in December. A statewide conference is being planned for February 27, 2014.

Interagency Partnership with the Office of Refugees and Immigrants (ORI)—partnership to support early learning and school readiness for immigrant and refugee children and their families

- On November 8, the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA) in partnership with the Multilingual Action Council (MAC) conducted a training, “New Start: Supporting Multilingual Young Children and Immigrant and Refugee Families”, in Worcester at Clark University for the early education field.
- The training covered the following topics: Immigrant & Refugee Demographics (Regional and State), ABC’s of Immigration & Refugee Law and Policy (Impact in children and Families), Immigration Status & Access to Benefits, Accessing Education (Birth to College), Cultural Competency & Family Engagement, Being a Resource for Families and connecting Families to local services and resources.

Museums and Libraries Project—partnership museums and libraries across the state to assist families in promoting early literacy, STEM and school readiness

- The Boston Children's Museum and the MA Libraries Commissioners facilitated 5 roundtable discussions for libraries across the state on family engagement.
- The Boston Children's Museum presented along Connie Sue Jones from the Norfolk Library and Mary Haggerty from WGBH on the STEM Kit and training at the MA STEM Summit on November 13.

Peer Assistance and Coaching (PAC)—program to support educators with peer coaching and mentoring in early childhood best practices to improve their skills

- The following vendors were awarded grants to support PAC activities:
 - Child Development and Education (for overall project management)
 - Little Sprouts (for relationship-based coaching training)
 - UMass Boston (for CLASS training)
 - Early Childhood Associates (for CLASS reliable observers)
 - Torch (for Instructional Platform)
 - EPS grantees (for regional professional learning communities)

Early Educators Fellowship Institute (EEFI)—community-based leadership series for early education and care providers in public and private programs from birth to grade three

- The Request for Proposals (RFP) was posted on October 29 to solicit a vendor to manage EEFI and plan the leadership meetings for 2014.